



HCR 137

**REQUESTING HOOKAKOO CORPORATION TO CONVENE A WORKING GROUP TO
DETERMINE STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT IN CONVERSION CHARTER SCHOOLS.**

Committee on Education

Committee on Labor & Public Employment

March 21, 2012

2:00 p.m.

Room 309

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) **SUPPORTS** HCR 137 which requests Ho'okāko'o Corporation to convene a working group to determine stakeholder involvement in conversion charter schools.

In previous OHA testimony in support of SB 2115, OHA noted the difficulties and conflicts between the governing board of a non-profit organization and the school communities and key stakeholders that the board served at Kamaile Academy in 2010 and recently at Waimea Middle school. OHA further offered support for SB 2115, SD 2 but recommended that §302B-14(e)(5) be amended to provide language allowing the school community the opportunity to disengage from the nonprofit organization. This language would give school communities like Kamaile and Waimea the opportunity to reorganize and submit revised applications to the charter school commission. At this point in time, there are no governance alternatives for conversion charter school communities. Consequently, the working group can further investigate these issues and come up with solutions.

Conversion charter schools are truly community schools, as they serve the community where they have been situated for years. The relationships, talents, and resources within those local communities deserve democratic input and participation, especially with respect to governance, and HCR 137 provides an opportunity for community input.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this important measure.



KAMEHAMEHA SCHOOLS®

House Education Committee

March 21, 2012

2:00 p.m.

HCR 137

Requesting Hōkako'o Corporation to convene a Working Group to Determine Stakeholder Involvement in Conversion Charter Schools.

My name is Kalei Kailihiwa, Director of Kamehameha Schools' charter school support department, Ho'olako Like. Thank you for this opportunity offer comments on House Concurrent Resolution 137.

We support student, family and community engagement in education and therefore support the intent of this measure. Our emphasis has been to strongly and affirmatively support Hawaii Public Charter Schools in seeking accreditation from the Western Association of Schools and Colleges ("WASC"). Through the accreditation process, schools and their communities have a meaningful opportunity to reflect on the school's mission, vision and the community's engagement in the educational process.

The long-standing achievement gap of Native Hawaiian students in the state's public schools is a significant concern for Kamehameha Schools and for many diverse stakeholders including the legislature. Increasingly data and practice in indigenous communities demonstrate the importance of culturally relevant education as a means for engaging and empowering students and their families in the learning process. Culture-based education has been proven in Hawaii to make a difference in student achievement and wellbeing.

Kamehameha Schools has been a collaborator with Hawaii public charter schools for the past decade in recognition of the ability of Hawaiian-focused public charter schools to cultivate environments where culture based education thrives. We have intensively focused our efforts with Hawaii public charter schools in the areas of strategic, operational and instructional excellence framed by an approach to school accreditation. Kamehameha Schools' work with public charter schools as they engage in the deeply reflective, highly rigorous Self Study phase of WASC accreditation is a significant opportunity for the school to reconnect with its vision and mission as a community public school.

Kamehameha Schools believes that its efforts provide more positive educational choices and ultimately enhances academic achievement and greater school engagement for Hawaiian students. Through these collaborations, Kamehameha Schools currently assists more than 4,000 students in eleven communities on 4 major islands, within the public education system.

March 20, 2012

TO: The Honorable Roy Takumi, Chair-House Committee on Education
The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair-House Committee on Labor and Public Employment
Honorable Members of the Joint Committees

FROM: Robert K. Lindsey, Jr.
Trustee, Hawai'i Island
Office of Hawaiian Affairs

RE: **HCR 137 - Testimony in SUPPORT**

I want to mahalo Representative Cindy Evans for introducing this critical Resolution at a fragile time in the life of our town. Recently our Waimea Community was devastated by the abrupt departure of our Middle School Principal John Colson; a man loved, revered and respected by many and who made our Middle School a magical place of learning and a safe space for our haumana. The scars of what happened in the past two months will not disappear quickly but I know they will for "Time heals all wounds."

Embedded in **HCR 137** is a process that will allow for "recovery" to take place. The process is a good one and does two things; provides a pathway to prevent future incidents as well as a space for the healing that needs to occur in both our school and our community.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on HCR 137.

belatti2 - Kate

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Saturday, March 17, 2012 8:32 AM
To: EDNtestimony
Cc: kcdassis@gmail.com
Subject: Testimony for HCR137 on 3/21/2012 2:00:00 PM

Testimony for EDN 3/21/2012 2:00:00 PM HCR137

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: kathy dassis
Organization: Individual
E-mail: kcdassis@gmail.com
Submitted on: 3/17/2012

Comments:

Because of the many issues our school(waimea middle school on the Big Island) and others have had with hookakoo, I agree that it is very important to revisit how the org interacts with the communities, parents, staff, and children of conversion charter schools. Our community feels raped and abused by hookakoo.

belatti2 - Kate

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Saturday, March 17, 2012 1:17 PM
To: EDNtestimony
Cc: cobba001@hawaii.rr.com
Subject: Testimony for HCR137 on 3/21/2012 2:00:00 PM

Testimony for EDN 3/21/2012 2:00:00 PM HCR137

Conference room: 309
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Ann Cobb
Organization: Individual
E-mail: cobba001@hawaii.rr.com
Submitted on: 3/17/2012

Comments:

Recent actions taken by Ho'okako'o at Waimea Middle School without input from, or any advance warning to, the school stakeholders has left the entire Waimea Community, especially middle school parents and students, puzzled, angry and upset. Stakeholder input takes place for non-conversion DOE schools through their PTSA's or equivalent. This same courtesy (requirement) should absolutely be extended to charter conversion schools.

MARGARET WILLE
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Kamuela, Hawaii 96743
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March 20, 2012

To : EDN State Legislative Committee
From: Margaret Wille, concerned resident
Re: HCR 137 HEARING 2PM MARCH 20, 2012

I agree with the intent of HCR 137: Re convening a working group to determine stakeholder involvement in conversion charter schools

HOWEVER in order for this effort to succeed at the intent, the following amendments should be approved:

1. co-chairpersons of this working group -- one being a member of the local community who is not a board member of Hookakoo corporation. The local community should select this person.
2. The two chairpersons would then together have the responsibility to select the membership of the working group based on the stakeholder groups listed in the Resolution (parents, teachers, non-certified school personnel, the community, the local school board, and students)

AMEND THE RESOLVE SECTIONS OF THE RESOLUTION AS FOLLOWS:

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Executive Director of Hookakoo Corporation is requested to serve as a the co-chairperson of the working group; the other co-chairperson shall be selected by the local community at large at an open community meeting, which community meeting shall be scheduled within 30 days of passage of this Resolution; and,

....

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the ~~Executive Director of Hookakoo Corporation is~~ chairpersons of the working group are requested to appoint members of the working group to consist of at least one representative from each school currently under its jurisdiction from each of the following groups:

belatti2 - Kate

From: Teriitavae Perez on behalf of Rep. Cindy Evans
Sent: Tuesday, March 20, 2012 1:23 PM
To: EDNtestimony
Subject: FW: HCR137 Testimony
Attachments: WMS HCR137.doc

From: Claire Brouwer [<mailto:clairebrouwer@hotmail.com>]
Sent: Tuesday, March 20, 2012 1:00 PM
To: Rep. Cindy Evans; Sen. Malama Solomon; boblindsey808@gmail.com; Rep. Marcus Oshiro
Subject: HCR137 Testimony

The following is my testimony regarding HCR 137.
Thank you all sincerely for your continued support of the Hawaii State Public Charter Conversion Schools.

RE: HCR137

I am the mother of two Waimea Public Conversion Charter Middle School students affected by the firing of principal Mr. John Colson by the Honolulu-based Local School Board (LSB) Ho'okako'o Corp. (HC). The unilateral decision by the LSB to inflict this mid-semester disruption upon the school, without regard for the impact on the students, faculty, and staff, was dictated in a most heavy-handed and non-collaborative manner. I want to thank Rep. Cindy Evans for her concern and recommendations, as reflected in this resolution (HCR 137). We most definitely need to examine the relationship between public conversion charter school LSBs and the school-community they are serving.

While the proposed resolution is a good start, I urge the committee to strengthen the provisos of the resolution by establishing a co-chair relationship for the work group, rather than the current proposal of placing the HC Executive Director in the sole executive position. The co-chairs would be the HC Executive Director **and** an independent community member or recognized educational leader (preferably with public charter school expertise), as selected by the authorizer, i.e. the Charter School Review Panel (CSRP).

Further, I would urge the CSRP to provide the work group with sufficient staff support so as not to be dependent on the resources of HC to examine the issue.

Finally, I would urge that this work group be authorized to meet with all related parties, including Kamehameha Schools and other current or potential funders in its research to develop appropriate recommendations to assure that the best interests of students are foremost in every decision.

Finally, as written in the Waimea PCC Middle School's Detailed Implementation Plan (DIP), I would urge the work group to strongly consider **formalizing** the concept of "*A Collaborative Partnership between Ho'okako'o Corporation and Waimea Middle School*" (see the first page headline of the WMS DIP). This could be accomplished through a stated Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between HC and the work group that insures equitable representation, participation, and transparency in all decision making.

I understand that a great deal of work has been accomplished over the past year by a legislatively mandated charter school governance work group. One of the recommendations reportedly already embraced by CSRP is a transition to "bilateral performance contracts" between public charter schools and the authorizer. I suggest that this contract process be reviewed by HCR 137's proposed conversion charter school work group

and that the work group would also provide guidance to CSRP addressing specific expectations for school-community collaboration in the development of “bilateral performance contracts.”

Sincerely,

Claire Brouwer,

Parent - Waimea Public Conversion Charter Middle School students

59-281 Kanaloa Drive

Kamuela, HI 96743

808.938.1418

Testimony regarding HCR 137

My name is Jennifer Hannum and my daughter currently attends Waimea Middle School as an eighth grader. I was always aware that WMS was a conversion charter school which was always presented to me as a school that allowed for local involvement. It wasn't until the events that happened on 2/7 with the firing of Jon Colson as our principal that I realized that the community involvement was a complete falsehood. Ho'okakoo was in charge and their behavior was absolutely ruthless and in a word vile. The thought that these "board members" with no educational background nor any ties to the community could come in and turn everything upside down within a matter of 24hrs with no open dialogue with the community was unfathomable. Their actions that came within weeks of HAS testing really makes me question their integrity as a school board because if their primary goal was to put children first then they failed horribly. They further insulted us by putting out questionnaires asking for our input regarding our future principal when the community had made their opinion heard quite loudly about who they would like to see resume his position as principal.

I am in support of forming a working group but I would like to see a community leader be acting as co-chair with Hookakoo so as to make sure that the concerns of the community at large will be addressed and not ignored. I would like to know that the state through the Charter School review board will provide support to the working group so as to make sure that all information is correct and non-biased. I would also like to see Kamehameha Schools send a representative since Hookakoo has been the only representation of Kamehameha Schools currently and I do not believe that with their commitment to higher education that they would be in agreement to those acting on their behalf. I would also like to see that the decisions made during the work group become public record so that we all can understand and not live with the constant veil of innuendo. The tragedy that played out at Waimea Middle School should not be allowed to happen again.

Thank-you for your help in this matter,

Jennifer Hannum

farrier@ilhawaii.net